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Campus Assembly minutes 02/17/2016

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Campus Assembly Meeting
February 17, 2016

I. Chancellor Remarks.

Chancellor Johnson gave the following remarks: “You will note that I have been given a mere five minutes on the agenda for this campus assembly. Is this a function of the fact that someone thinks I’m inclined to be long winded? Couldn’t be. No, instead, I asked that my time be limited so that we could extend time for what I hope will be important and lively discussions regarding ...

Campus governance – or what I prefer to think of as shared governance, following AAUP’s language – a discussion where we consider in which we can improve engagement; reduce cynicism; and better understand how we might work effectively together to shape the course of this institution.

Recruitment and retention – in which we consider together data related to recruitment and retention and review some of the ways in which we are trying to improve the persistence of students to strengthen campus culture, environment, and financial health.

A report on the activities of the finance committee – which has been working with me and Bryan Herrmann and Colleen Miller to advise us on best strategies to produce a balanced budget. And here I will just add that I am grateful to MCSA and to those of you who attended the community meeting for the opinions expressed and advice provided.”

II. For Action. From the Steering Committee. Minutes from 12/1/16 approved as presented. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

III. Old Business.

None

IV. New Business.

A. For Action. From the Membership Committee. The following committee replacements approved as presented. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

LeAnn Dean replaces Jayne Blodgett on the Finance Committee
Joseph Beaver replaces Mike Vandenberg on the Scholastic Committee

B. For Information. Report from the Consultative Committee.

Julie Eckerle, chair of the Consultative Committee gave the following report:

Report overview

- Background and process
- Key themes

- Goals moving forward
- Recommendations
- Discussion

Background and process

Spring 2015: CC raised campus governance issue at Campus Assembly “for information” and solicited feedback

Fall 2015: CC asked all committee chairs to consult with committee members on issues related to governance and service and – if willing – to share their thoughts with CC.

CC met with Division Chairs to discuss perceived inequities in the discipline coordinator position.

CC developed a survey intended to assess precisely what tasks discipline coordinators do.

CC sent a message to the all university employees listserv requesting feedback on campus governance and service issues.

Spring 2016: CC co-chairs Julie Eckerle and Jayne Blodgett consulted with Membership committee co-chairs regarding perceived inequities in committee assignments.

CC compiled and discussed all of the data and feedback gathered over the last year.

Feb 17: CC reports on its major findings – i.e. the primary themes that were most consistent in the feedback received.

Key themes

#1 - There is a perception across all campus constituencies that Campus Assembly has become more of a venue for *reporting* than for *discussing*.

#2 - There is a perception across all campus constituencies that service commitments have expanded across campus. This perception has contributed to decreased morale, energy, and willingness to participate in service/government.

#3 - There is a perception across all campus constituencies that the administration does not fully attend to or respect the service that we do. This leads to the perception that service does not really matter. This in turn contributes to frustration and lower morale.

Our goals moving forward

- To revitalize campus governance,

- To reduce service “bloat” and be more intentional about service commitments and expectations across campus,
- To strengthen working relationship between campus members and administration

Recommendations for revitalizing campus governance

- 1) The Steering Committee should consider changes to Campus Assembly that will allow for and/or encourage more discussion and more engagement. Options include:
 - re-organizing the agenda and/or substance of the agenda;
 - assuring that Q &A after reports not be confused with actual discussion;
 - allowing for *discussion* time after all pertinent topics;
 - changing the venue (perhaps to the HFA Recital Hall?), if only on a trial basis;
 - video-recording every meeting and making recordings available to all assembly members;
 - re-considering the current meeting time; and
 - enabling electronic voting
- 2) A session on campus governance should be incorporated into new faculty/staff orientation and/or into events like the Faculty Professional Development day.
- 3) Informational materials about campus governance should be developed for easy access (one-page summary of Constitution on YouTube video, etc.)

Recommendations for addressing service concerns (bloat, workload inequity, etc.)

- 1) The Constitution Review Committee should consider reducing the size and number of committees.
- 2) The Constitution Review Committee should re-evaluate the constituency of committees in order to ensure appropriate representation.
- 3) MCSA should re-evaluate it’s own committee structure along the same lines in order to revitalize student participation.
- 4) Supervisors across campus should encourage employees to participate in campus governance when circumstances allow and to reinforce the message that governance matters.
- 5) Where possible and pertinent, job descriptions should include service and/or campus governance participation; these expectations should in turn be included in annual reviews and performance evaluations.

Recommendations for strengthening working relationship between campus members and administration

- 1) The UMM Chancellor Search Committee should take CC’s findings into account when interviewing and selecting candidates.
- 2) The Constitution Review Committee should review Article 2, Section 2 regarding the chancellor’s performance review and consider a means for making sure campus input occurs. (“There shall be substantial UMM representation on the review committee, and input from the entire campus shall be considered”).

Discussion

Tammy Berberi wondered how a video of the meeting would be different from the minutes. Eckerle responded that the committee has not thought the idea through yet – it would just be another venue and means for the campus to get information.

Sarah Buchanan worries that a YouTube video might stifle some points of view. Eckerle said the issue of sharing information that happens in meetings keeps coming up.

Michelle Page suggested that, if possible, it would be great for our campus to follow the same format the University Senate uses. All of the minutes includes “in the minutes” so it let’s her decide whether or not she wants to read them.

Buchanan added that she’s on the fence about this issue – while having a lot of input and feedback is important – we have representatives on various committees so they can do the work. Seems like we’re reproducing the work that committees are already doing. Sometimes just having this group (assembly) approve the work of the committee is a good thing. Eckerle responded that there’s a fine balance. Most of us weren’t trained to do administrative or service tasks we are assigned to do. The fact that we’re here and so many people responded with discontent makes the idea worth revitalizing.

Berberi asked how many people responded. Eckerle said the percentage was gained through the committee chairs of the various committees so she couldn’t give an exact number. There were pages and pages of feedback and the CC tried hard to detach names from the comments. We don’t have an exact number because of the way the information came to CC.

Simone Franco asked if feedback was perceived issues or actual issues? Eckerle said mostly perceived. Time and resources did not allow the committee to do more data gathering. The perception about service is not campus wide but the perception needs to be addressed. Some issues can clearly be looked at and others cannot. Moving forward as the CC sends the suggestions, they are hoping the committees will take the time to look at some of the issues. Everyone has a role in shared governance and there is plenty of room to collect more data.

Chris Dallager added that he thought this was a good model for how discussion and feedback should take place at assembly meetings.

Arne Kildegaard said he thinks streamlining committees is a good idea; however, it seems a lot of service obligations that have nothing to do with committee work. He believes we should be very careful about including service in job descriptions and annual reviews. Rebecca Webb said that was her idea because we have supervisors who pressure their staff not to serve on committees. If we truly are inclusive, then all supervisors need to support and encourage their employees to serve on committees and it should be made very clear that every employee is expected to serve.

Eckerle said this is exactly the kind of wonderful feedback the CC wanted. She realizes that the context changes from faculty members to P&A staff members to USA staff members. If you have more ideas, please send to Eckerle or any of the CC members.

Chancellor Johnson wondered if there could be a chapter 2 – thinking it might be nice to hear about shared governance from an administrative perspective. She appreciates the work of the CC and believes the issue deserves continued conversation.

C. For Information. Enrollment and Retention Update.

Ben Iverson and Bryan Herrmann walked through a PowerPoint presentation on enrollment and retention explaining the education landscape; application comparison; enrollment projects; and new initiatives. Roger Rose wondered why we are losing students between fall and spring. Herrmann said based on the research we've done with Noel Levitz, there isn't a single reason why students are leaving. Mary Elizabeth Bezanson asked how many students come in with credits and how many are actually paying us for the 120 credits required for graduation. Herrmann said a significant number of students come in with some kind of credit; some students graduate early and there a lot of students who graduate with more than 120 credits. Jennifer Goodnough noted that the Twin Cities is in the process of fairly dramatically increasing their out of state tuition and wondered if we are anticipating an impact on us. Tammy Berberi wondered how if there are patterns to compare first generation students and the number of students who receive PELL grants.

D. For Information. Update from the Finance Committee.

Chancellor Johnson complimented the Finance Committee for the way in which they understand the logic of the budget and how the university system works. Please look for the minutes of the meeting for their discussions.

V. Campus Committee Reports.

A. For Information. From the Constitution Review task force.

Michael Korth reported that the current incarnation of the Constitution Review Committee has three members: David Israels-Swenson, Matt Zaske and Michael.

We identified approximately 30 issues lying in the detritus bequeathed to us by our predecessor committee and have made some progress sorting them into thematic groups. For example, one of the groups is concerned with elections and voting. Another group includes issues related to committee size, committee membership, and concepts of representation. Of course, there are issues that don't group well.

Some issues are deeply tied into the culture of the campus and will require substantial conversations before any action could be contemplated. We intend to have such conversations but probably not this semester.

Some of the issues on the list do not appear to be constitutional issues. We may make suggestions as to what should be done with them.

VI. All University Reports.

- Peh Ng announced that President Kaler will hold his State of the University Address on March 3 from 1:00-2:00 pm. His address will broadcast live via ITV in HFA 45.

- Michelle Page reported that the University Senate Committee on Committees has several openings for faculty slots. Please contact Michelle if you are interesting in representing UMM at the system level.

VII. Announcements.

A. General Announcements

- Kerry Barnstuble, Coordinator for the Commission on Women, reported that a childcare survey was sent out last year and we are looking at some possible options to address some of the issues. One of those issues was childcare available during assembly meetings. The Vice Chancellor for Finance and Facilities, the Office of Community Engagement and the Commission on Women will be working together to coordinate logistics and are hoping to pilot the program for the March 23 campus assembly."
- On behalf of the Membership Committee, Roger Rose encouraged everyone to fill out the committee preferences form that has been sent out. A couple of points of interest: if you do not fill out the form, you open yourself to be placed on any committee; you will not receive a form if you are in the middle of your term and are continuing service.

B. Update from the Chair of the Chancellor Search Committee

Peh Ng reported that members of the search committee have been very busy reviewing applicant materials. We are still on target with our timeline: off-site interviews will be held the week of March 7; on campus interviews will take place the weeks of March 21 through April 1. Those dates of not been confirmed yet – the campus will be informed of the dates. Please try to attend as many meetings as you can when the candidates are on campus.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm.